

**PUBLIC HEARING
ROYALSTON HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
ROYALSTON TOWN HALL
ROYALSTON, MA
JUNE 20, 2012
7:30 p.m.**

ATTENDEES

Glenn Eaton, MRPC
Robert A. Clark, Petersham HDC, Co-Chair
Chuck LaHage, Gardner, Historical Committee, Head Chair
Nancy Allen, Chair, Petersham Historic District Commission
Patience Bundschuh, Former Chair Historic Neighbor on the Common District Committee
Ken Lively, Presenter of Application
Gene Cauthen, Royalston Resident
Andrew West, Royalston Historic District Commission Member
Andrea Lively, Applicant Presenter
Bob
Celt Grant, Royalston Historic District Commission
Elizabeth Farnsworth, Royalston Resident
Aaron Ellison, Royalston Resident
Philip Leger, Royalston Resident, 13 Taft Hill Road
George Northrop, Royalston Resident
Les Black, Royalston Resident and Real Estate Broker/Attorney
Barbara Deen, Royalston Homeowner
Theresa Quinn, Royalston Resident
Rick Carrier, Royalston Historic District Committee Member
Geoffrey Newton, Building Inspector
Donna Caisse, Royalston Energy Committee
Paul Tortorella, Royalston Resident, in The Common
Mary McKernan, Royalston Resident, in The Common
Chris Dawson, Royalston Resident, The Common Member

This is being recorded by Sony.

Glenn Eaton of the MRPC introduced himself.

Glenn Eaton, Executive Director of the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission opened the meeting at 7:32 p.m. This is a public hearing, I will read the public hearing notice, go over a written speech, time for introductions for panelist and other folks. Will then read some ground rules. Want to give a thank you to Linda Parmenter, Administrative and Human Resource

Director, through which our agency was able to help coordinate these wonderful volunteers and will ask them to introduce themselves. Linda had a very significant family emergency this week and even though, came in every day and help prepped for this meeting for this evening.

G. Eaton read the Public Hearing Notice

Public Hearing Notice – The Montachusett Regional Planning commission will hold a public hearing on Wednesday, June 20, 2012 at 7:30 PM in the Royalston Town Hall on an appeal of a decision of the Royalston Historic District Commission about the following project:

Property Address: 5 On the Common
Applicant: Kenneth and Andrea Lively
Application #: 2012-03-04

The application may be viewed at <http://www.royalston-ma.gov/HDC> (Pending Applications). Comments can be sent to MRPC, c/o L. Parmenter, 1427R Water Street, Fitchburg, MA 01420. Signed by Mr. Pierre Humblet, HDC Secretary.

G. Eaton read from the script, the ground rules and then panelist will introduce themselves.

G. Eaton Stated for the record: MRPC bylaw and state statue is set up in such a way that it is able to provide assistant to the communities, where here to moderate and facilitate tonight, that's my role. The volunteer panelist from Petersham, Petersham and Gardner, basically here volunteering out of their own good heart, they are not paid, I am, I want to say thank you and will send you another thank you later. MRPC convening this public hearing as the request of the Royalston Historic District Commission MRPC's involvement steams from the provision Of the Royal Historic District bylaw which designates MRPC as the body which designates the appeals panel, MRPC has put together a panel of experts for the appeal, which will introduce themselves and will provide background information, I will get to them in a minute. It's Nancy Allen, Robert Clark and Chuck Lahaye.

The ground rules:

Item 1. Hearing will get started with a presentation by the person appealing the decision, Mr. Ken Lively, Mr. Ken Lively, presents.

Item 2. Royalston Historic District Commission will present their case, is there a representative from the Royalston Historic District Commission, Celt Grant, will be representing the Royalston Historic District Commission.

Item 3. The panelist is allowed to ask questions at any time can ask applicant at any time, turn over to the Historic District Commission.

Item 4. Following that, the floor will be open for questions; comments from the audience, those from the audience must introduce themselves prior to speaking.

Item 4A. Audience must hold their questions and comments until later; you will get a chance, we just have to go through the procedures just like any other public hearing.

Item 5. Panelist will then deliberate; all are welcome to stay for the deliberation but must remain quiet.

Item 6. The Panelist will make its decision based on the information that they received prior to this meeting and the information they received this evening.

Item 7. After deliberation, MRPC will poll each individual panelist, asking what their vote is.

Item 8, the meeting will be adjourned.

Item 9, Final item, the decision, whatever the decision is, will be documented, written up and filed with the Town Clerk, obligated by the bylaws and the statute to do that, we have up to 45 days, that day runs out on July 1. Our goal is to make it before July 1, want to be timely as humanly possible.

Once a decision has been made to adjourn, that's it.

I will ask the panelist to introduce themselves. Before we start are there any question about the ground rules.

Bob Casinghino asked: have you gotten any written comments or statements that you have and will be reading them, may be unaware of what you have been receiving.

G. Eaton - I will leave that up to the panel on what they want to hear, literally there were a lot received, but will leave it up to the panel to handle.

B. Cashinghino - Would the comment be made public?

G. Eaton - Yes, they are public records. There is an awful lot to read, could literally be here until 9:00 or 10:00 PM. Please do remember to ask the question again, so we don't forget this question.

The Panelist Introductions:

Nancy Allen, Chair, Petersham Historic District Commission, had been a member for going on 9 years, Vice Chair and Chair, currently Chairman of the Commission.

Bob Clark, Petersham Historic District Commission, has been a member 20+ years; I was chair for many years and currently Vice Chair,

Chuck LaHage, Gardner, Historical Commission, been on for 12 years, has been Head Chair for about 8 years.

G. Eaton - Before we get to the ground rules, we have a sign in sheet to pass around.

Applicant:

Mr. Ken Lively, presented, has a full-size panel that he wanted to display to the panel.

G. Eaton – Asked; does the panel want to go outside to see the panel, a site visit. They all agree to go outside to see the panel Ken talked to.

K. Lively – Displayed the picture boards with pictures of the site, and pictures taken in March and May and June when the tree grows at least two season worth of photos and for the record picture boards are displayed in the meeting room.

K. Lively - Introduced himself and wants to make sure the panel received all the documents he provided to Linda.

N. Allen - Confirmed that the panel did receive all that he had listed for documents.

K. Lively - This application solely based on the Royalston Historic District on the guideline and that the Commission keeps an open mind, Ken is also a Commission member. Bylaws also state under Part E, Section 1 guidelines, the Commission will follow the guidelines specified in the Salem Historic District Handbook in the town historic bylaws, this is too big for Royalston, so used the Salem Historic Bylaws, went over the guidelines with a fine-tooth comb to make sure I had it correctly.

K. Lively - Have you seen the Salem District Guidelines?

Panelist – Yes, received them.

K. Lively - It states if you put a solar system in, you need to put in a place that minimized visibility and in my opinion my barn roof does that, this application has detailed pictures of barn, brochure, a sample of 1B and 2B is the position on the barn, they are scaled drawings, manufacture specification. The Salem talks about not putting on a primary structure. This application has been modified several times and all thirty-six panels are on the barn roof. In the Salem talks about when ruling on Certificate of Appropriateness for solar energy system, the Commission shall consider the policy on Commonwealth encouraging the use of such systems and protect solar access, doesn't give you access to it, but want to make it available. Some of the discussion over the last several months about setting a precedent in my opinion each will be ruled on a case-by-case basis, rule this on what you see on my particular house, not every house in the district has a south facing roof, each house has a little bit of different position to the street.

K. Lively - Showed his barn roof and dimensions. Location was talked about a lot in the Salem Bylaws and they want you to consider the scale and proportions. After several different plans, we decided for the barn to host all of it. All thirty-six on the barn roof will fill the barn roof top to bottom, side-to-side everything will be panel or black aluminum. Stand in the front of the house you can't see the array at all from the South you can. It also states that you would want these installed under a wing, secondary mass, it is on my barn, the furthest from the street, it is a barn, not a house a beautiful barn, but not a house; it is a working structure housing horses.

To the south of my barn are multiple trees on my lawn and neighbor's lawn. In the matter of time, will be brief, there is a board that shows this with details. A ground array and K. Lively did extensive research on ground array, need to have about 2 and 2 ½ acres of trees removed, had a logger onsite would cost a few thousand dollars just to have the trees cut, but would then have to have tree removed and also the stumps removed, stumps would continue to grow if not removed and would look worse. Cannot get to it from my land, would have to go through the Common which I'm sure the town would approve, a neighbor or an abutter on the backside, and can't get the equipment in easily. I have a lot of information on the ground array and why it doesn't fit our site my opinion if you'd like more information. Also state to set array as far back as you can. I have done 5 yrs. of research on solar and multiple months since January of formulating this application, it says, don't put on your primary elevation, this is not going on my house. We will screen our array; all the panels lying on the roof, panels will be flat as possible to the roof. Everything electronic will be under the panel or in the barn; the wiring will not be scene from the street. The panel does reflect some sort of light; it will look different on every given day. Have involved several people in Massachusetts, emailed 16 historic districts in Massachusetts to ask if they have solar in their district, Nantucket, Lowell, Salem, Hull Andover, Dedham and Hingham have solar in their district.

G. Eaton any questions from the panel no questions.

Panel – No questions

K. Lively closing arguments. We have done everything humanly possible to follow guidelines, states, local and national, we have done everything in the beginning, house is insulated, extensive research, the array is the best that we can do in our opinion. Ask panel members to base their decisions on the facts in front of you, but on facts and not emotions. I appreciate you all for being here.

C. Grant – Filling in for the Chairman that is out of the country. This has been a long process and struggled over this issue for several months. Part of the issue we are dealing with, the Historic Commission has never dealt with this before, any precedent to follow. We would like to see each application for solar panels on merits no precedents. We worked with the applicant over several meetings and have adapted his application to meet our concerns, but the Commission was not entirely satisfied with the application and when it came to the final vote

after the hearings and community input, the Commission was divided. There were 8 members and were divided 3 to 3 and 2 recusals. We were divided 3 to 3 with no decision. This brings us here.

For the record:

C. Grant voted in favor of the application and in fairness asking one of the members of the commission who voted against this application.

B. Casinghino, Royalston Historic District Commission Member

We looked at this and the concerns of the folks which resolved around a few things looking at the historic district not only houses but landscape views, we have to be concerned with. While Salem a very urban environment where as Royalston is very much a rural environment. Very visible when walking it is not a small array, but an extremely large array. How visible is it from any point, K. Lively did modify to black has silver in it highly reflective, was originally blue which will add to the visibility. Did request looking into the ground array, would be less noticeable alternative, granted more expensive. Need to really look at these; in my opinion not really our role to look at something being green. Green is nice and if can be done largely not visible. Had a gentlemen off the common on his back roof, we approved but again on his back roof and largely not visible. Our role is to preserve the character of the District in the appropriateness of any applications. In that regard, I think the folks that voted against felt that it was not appropriate for that large of array to being that visible on the Common as you approach in. You have to look at it from the prospective from people walking. It is going to be extremely visible from the road in a public way. Lastly vegetation; K. Lively mentioned, we have no jurisdiction on vegetation. As I look at the Salem guidelines, it does consistently says, minimize visibility and look at what was approved in Salem what you see is a slight line across the top, if that was what I see here, I think it would be approved, I would have approved it. Salem urban environment don't have barns tend to have garages, tend to behind building, here can have a very long view, as a result of these points, largely why the 3 folks voted against it weren't in favor of the application. K. Lively did work with us to try to minimize the view, if it did get approved what would be most acceptable at the end of it all it is such a large array and extremely visible, which is a large concern.

G. Eaton asked if there are any questions.

Audience Member - Why does Royalston use the town of Salem as a leading guide? Andy West, member of the commission feeling was that Salem was one of the most experience Historic Districts in the State, Nantucket being another one; the Commission has failed attempts at trying to write their own bylaws it has been our guidelines since it was formed in 1980.

B. Clark to the commission what does Mr. Lively have to accomplish to get your blessing, I think he has gone to great lengths. Put my Maine experience on, have been going there for thirty-six years, have historic districts, old fishing village, also allow solar panel and medal roofs, what

else could be done? Ground array, with shrubby or something around it less visible. That would be more acceptable than on the barn. Would not rule a ground array, I'm just one person. I'm not sure anyone else that voted against it.

G. Eaton asked: How many members of the historic Commission – about 6

Comment - It's not the actual look of the panel that bothers you maybe more of the reflection?

C. Lahaye - A large array, very visible look and when we were incorporated in 80, comment one of the ESPNA made was that we have one of the most pristine commons. We have a certain strong responsibility and ways heavier than being green or saving money; it is not cheap to live in the historic district. It is a tradeoff. For me visibility, reflectiveness, overall view of the Common to worry about and be concerned with not just the homes but whole environment.

Rick Carrier – The reason why I voted no, was the visibility of it. We aren't against solar but the visibility and the Commission and the definition of the preservation. We have seen a lot of the owners spend so much money to preserve these homes and in respect of these owners I just felt solar panels with that much visibility may be 5 to 10 percent, but a 100 visibility percent didn't feel it was appropriate in a historic district.

G. Eaton - 6 members of the commission, three have spoken do you want to hear from any of the others, he asked the panel. We can come back to this.

Chris Dawson - Alternate member of the Commission - wasn't able to attend the last meeting and would not be here, if I had attended the last meeting. I spoke at the public hearing as a member of the Commission and as a resident of the Common. Ken and Andrea has done a great job and to get it off the grid and as invisible as possible. More than anything, using Salem as guideline, very good one and a fall back but this is a unique community. A community of artist, writers and creative people, and people just want to live in the country and a very pristine area. That being said, don't let all that creativity and artistic talent and fierce independence and that also speaks to how we should deal with application to allow being independence including energy independence. Bob Clark maintains that isn't all about being green; there is an element about very much about being green and Royalston Community values that above many other things and that character of the community as well as the Common. I certainly would have voted in favor of the application and a well done application.

G. Eaton - Asked the panel if there they like to hear from the other two from the Commission.

N. Allen - Yes, we would like to hear from them if they want to speak.

Andrew West – Thank everyone for coming tonight, big commitment and all volunteers, the more people at a public hearing, the better. I think that Ken did an amazing job at revising his

application many times and put in the best possible location for his situation. The Commission did amazing job visiting remote sites where these arrays were installed, contacting other districts as well and doing a lot of research and in-depth analysis of solar panels and where they fit and don't fit in a historic district. What I like to point out, there is no other modern characteristic that is highlighted in both the State and Royalston Historic District Bylaw other than solar alternative energy, in that respect, we need to consider solar energy above any other modern structure, that makes us number one to take it more seriously, this District is very pristine, I'm a resident of the District and would not be here if I wasn't serious, I feel that a solar array is not necessarily out of place. I agree that this is a significant change for our district. I agree that there are in my opinion that the side use from the barn is not significant, but the view from coming into Common through the trees between the houses is more significant. I voted in favor of this application, I do not find that the particular setting of this array offensive, I drove by a colonial style house on the roof, while modern house, but stopped to look at the angle and don't find it offensive.

N. Allen – Question for Ken - House was built in what year?

K. Lively - 1836 front side, most of the house has been add ones, our house was two rooms over two rooms, last addition was the barn not sure of the year but guessing early 1900's and continually added on over the years.

N. Allen - How long have you been in the District?

K. Lively - Grow up in Athol, in 1996 my wife and I and two dogs move to Royalston, good friend lived in the District, we saw the house fell in love with it moved in 96. We love the District, been on the Commission several years late 1990 and now back on the Commission since '09, I love the District, if this was the front of my house or front yard, I wouldn't even do this to the District. The barn fits all the guidelines all the current guidelines.

N. Allen - This again may seem going backward, therefore a little surprising giving all your knowledge and being a commission member your application about 2/3 of the roof, the shed house and barn all in blue, how was it that you submitted that application?

K. Lively - My roof is a slate blend and felt the blue blended in better, I wanted to break up the array, 18 panels on the barn 10 on the wood shed and I think 9 on the main house. After first public hearing they were against the wood shed and after I relooked at it I was, too. Closer to the ground and closer to the street. Did more research and one of the guideline, do not put it on a primary structure. Why did I switch from blue to black, one reason most of the Public Commons and most were against with the blue, black was considerably more, but switch to black. Looking back I wish I would have started with black.

N. Allen - I can see the logic.

K. Lively - I don't think it going to be much reflective as people think. It has been a process and I have learned a lot since my first application and I really tried to do my best and clearly have done that.

N. Allen - What other things have you done to make your home energy efficient? In 2008, we had serious water damage, we had 8" fiberglass insulation in the attic, multiple ice dams in every room in the house, and in 08 we lost a part of every room. Started the process 5 years ago green technology insulating. We brought in MassSave a National Grid affiliate; we removed floor board and had those all air sealed, 15" of insulations. We had our walls dense packed and insulation and every windows re-glazed, kept old window, put weather stripping and storms on the outside, insulated the cellar, new furnace in '96. Solar system will save thousands of dollars. Financial point of view save 10 of thousands, won't have to replace our furnace had it patch, intention to use the sun to creative electricity to back up heat for the house and heat our hot water. We have a wood stove, first step of being green and first thing you want to do is conserve your usage. This will save us 600 gallons of oil, plus our electric.

N. Allen - Asked what else you have investigated other than the solar array? Did have any estimates not in front of me?

K. Lively, Terracocca I think was the name out of Battleboro, did a site survey we were going to do a drill not a horizontal pitch, 25 – 30 thousand dollars, you would need a new furnace, could not use the steam furnace, we heat with steam, would have to put in a new unit, couldn't get hot enough to make steam, could put in a 300 foot window.

N. Allen funny enough it was part of the past, easier argument with my historic background.

C. Lahaye – re; woodstove what it be safe to say most of the houses in the Common has a woodstove as a secondary heat?

K. Lively - Some are main source and some are wood and pellets. It's a mixed bag. Estimate 50/50.

C. Lahaye - Solar energy nothing goes into the air, wood, pellet stoves could be smoky down there.

N. Allen - What are your ultimate goals?

K. Lively - Solar array to be designed working with the solar company average last two years electric bills, average per month 9000kwt and what we need to power? With the thought of taken the domestic water off the furnace and save the oil, instead of doing 100% this array is 116% hoping the 16% will power the domestic hot water heater, goal is to completely eliminate oil, our furnace is there and working, the next caretaker may not want to heat with wood and electric as a backup, our goals is to reduce totally and not have an electric bill. We feel it is the right environmentally things to do just my opinion.

N. Allen - Well it is the heart of the dilemma, but we all want the right environmental thing, but for who live in old home and district that's the crux's, how to balance that. If the government offered financial incentive geothermal would you maybe have done that?

K. Lively - I looked into solar 5 years ago and the incentive at this point is far greater than 5 years ago, payback was about 30 years. At this particular array based solely on electricity about 6 year payback with oil it is 3 years. Those are numbers again.

Panelist question – You have done a tremendous amount of research obviously, does the reflectiveness of the panels diminish over time?

K. Lively - It diminishes by 1% every year. This consider black mono panel, definitely deflects light. These panels do reflect light and certain light flat black, the silver you saw in the panel and from the road are going to appear black. That was the blackest panel this company has. Some are going to reflect more than others, some days are going to be a flat back.

Panelist Question - If it does diminish over time, does it reduce its efficiency?

K. Lively - It does, it is a 30 year panel, guaranteed for 25 years, and it diminishes a percent a year, even at the 20, 25, 30 year mark, we will still have enough electricity to power our needs. We are hoping to have a zero bill not every month but at the end of the year.

N. Allen – One thing that this thing this panel didn't get benefit of, mentioned in the minutes, but didn't see anywhere else, a request of location of examples of existing locations.

K. Lively - They did a tour, the Commission went individually. I have the houses they went to look at.

N. Allen - I regret this panel didn't this information and not a reflection of MRPC's as they have a tremendous job.

N. Allen - A picture is not going to be a site visit.

K. Lively - There were two with black mono and two with blue ploy at the time they wanted to look at both. Actually have more pictures. Showing the houses they viewed from different angles, one reflects more than the other. This is the panel we are putting up, showed the same panels as well as black panels on houses and garage.

K. Lively showed the photos for each and from different angles. This is what the panel went out to look at and I went out and took pictures myself.

G. Eaton- we will put the photos up on the side and available to the public domain.

N. Allen did you look in to solar shingles?

K. Lively - We did, but don't have the numbers in front of me, but incredibly expensive.

N. Allen - Was there government incentives.

K. Lively - not sure. It is a new roof put on in '09.

G. Eaton does the panel have any more questions of the applicant? We will open up to the audience.

Audience questions:

Audience member - I live in the Historic District, lived here ever since the District was formed. One of the matters was discussed at length when we form the district, this is a not a museum, this is where people live, we need to function, need to adapt to modern day live, function the best you can and means to exists. People have to live and have regular lives and how the panels would look, most people drive cars and not too many people walking in the common. We have to put more value into the fact as to how people need to adapt without out changing the major portion of the house or the District, but adapt to modern day and all think about our energy cost, not important when the district was established, but today it is. Need to take this into consideration.

Philip Leger – Royalston Resident 40 years.

Was here at the time we voted for the Historic District, at that time no one really live in the Historic District. It wouldn't look like this had not everyone here taken the time to take care of these houses. However, I think the main issue is visibility and the preservation pristineness of the Common. One main intrusion on the Common is the utility lines, asphalt, street lights, street signs, swimming pools, satellite dishes, septic system and is all most intrusive. The 21st Century is upon us, unfortunately, energy is an issue, looking this presentation at the way Ken is showing us and if installed and after the initial look, most people after that will not find it intrusive from in the front of the building. From a site purpose most people aren't really going to know it is there. The Historic District over time has done a great job and not always going to agree and we will still get along tomorrow. I support this because once it is on, it is going to look like part of the roof and after that, you aren't even going to notice it.

Les Black – Royalston Resident, I live in a newer house now but formerly lived in an 1809 Greek revival house in Fitzwilliam. I know the cost and challenges of running an old house and it is not cheap. By profession, I am a real estate broker and attorney. When a buyer is considering buying one of these old houses, they ask what are the heat and utility cost. If we can't give them an answer, but can answer zero fuel, that is a great answer. Increasing apparent as it is getting harder and harder to heat these houses with conventional fuel and further away a generation or two down the road, you won't even be having these meetings and this is a way to preserve these old home. He set precedents and a very good one, listed them, done his

homework, this is exactly how this should be done and he has presented to you, a very reasonable approach to solve the problem that is very difficult. Solar panels are not historic didn't have them years ago, but Yankee intuitive is, if they had seen them years ago and found out what they do, they would be applauding, as we should.

Patience Bunschuh – I live on the Common; I have also been here for 35 years. I was here when the Historic District formed. I want to commend Ken for this wonderful presentation and the research and thoughts that went into the presentation. I think we need to think future and solar energy and figure out a way and make it part of our Historic District. You can't stop people from helping people how to live their lives; we have to work within the Historic District to make it work. Also, like to say there is a fact a precedent for solar panels within the Historic District; when I was on the panel there was an application for solar, it created a big discussion, a difficult decision, but the Commission and the applicant worked together and was allowed on the rear part of the house and south facing, would be similar as to on the barn, so that is precedents, so this had occurred. We really have to think about something that is reversible and irreversible when we make these decisions. Should the technology become different or smaller we have some other ways to create energy. The roof on the barn will look exactly as it does before the solar panels put on it won't destroy any fabric of the common or the property and an important component.

Aaron Ellison – I live well North of the Common not in the Historic District. This really is about appropriateness and not really about money, although money is always an issue, the solar panels are designed to absorb light, take sunlight and make into electricity. This is a little bit of reflection, not a lot of reflection, we have solar array in our background, all we needed was a building permit, it is on the ground I walk by it every day or cutting the grass and I don't get flash in my eyes. It is absorbing all the light or 98% of the light and this gentleman the angle bounce it back up. I bought a new bicycle and commuting to work a couple days a week, but as a result I come through the Common and very conscious and see things when moving slowly not driving by, how much of this roof do I see south, I don't see it at all, coming north I see the edge of the roof, but can't see the entire barn can see the edge for about 2 seconds going 10MPH, which is actually far less when I see other modern convenient i.e. asphalt. I do see the roof, I'm sure I will see the panels for a second or two but will look like a roof because it will be all the same color. Since having panels in my year, I actually like the way they look. In my view, it is a positive way it looks.

Paul Torturella – A resident on the Common – This isn't a matter of taste but a matter of appropriateness. Yes, there has been an effort and commendable but not to be considered when making a decision. I'm a teacher and children put a lot of effort into their essays but some need to be improved. Barns hold a special place in architecture that should be also part of the Historic District. I've also done research and effort into this, taken this seriously a very important how much back and forth has gone on between the Commission and the Applicants. It is wonderful to hear people's values and there is a lot to go through here, have to come to a bottom line at some point. Almost every Historic District dealing with this is dealing with visibility. Go walk by and take a look at the roof and imagine it in the spring, summer, winter

and fall, this is what the guidelines and the Historic Districts are dealing with. When you do come to deliberate, try to reduce to what it is we are looking for a Historic District, nothing to do with being a museum, real estate, I think a lot at stake here not just in this District but in the State. Commission has to consider both and there are some houses just not suitable and this is one of them. To say you aren't going to see these, it's a large TV screen on the roof or a large flat window.

George Northrop – Royalston resident, does not live on the Common. Live here almost 40 years. Seems what needs to be said, has been said, but comes down to not a question of people need to be green or not, but the visibility of the structure that is going on the roof. I would respectfully disagree with those who feel that it will be highly visible beyond the initial viewing of it, I see many installation using these exact panels, not exactly the same but the black, flat screen panels, black frames. Often times I have to look twice to see if it is just the roofing material or panels. I did come to the first hearing on this application and at that time Ken and Andrea was proposing the blue panels and aluminum frame on the, same as I have on my house for almost 20 years and they are absolutely is a reflection on the grain. If they went ahead with that design would not be appropriate.

Andrea Lively – Spouse and Applicant – I want to look at this from the perspective of preservation and I feel that we are preserving the looks of the house by putting it as far away on the barn as we can. By doing the whole parameter of the barn roof, so it does mimic the roof itself and from another preservation perspective to preserve the historic esthetics from the Royalston Common, but also feel we have accountability to preserve our environment in our world as well as preserve human life. The news now a day we are losing human life because of our greed on oil. I just feel we need to be more accountable to that; we need to marry both of the issues esthetics as well as our environment.

Elizabeth Farnsworth – Royalston Resident - We have had a solar array since 2003 meets 85% of our energy demand. The alternatives from a ground seed solar ray will have far more reaching impact but would have clear cutting of trees which would undermine the esthetics of the Commons. Point of fact visibility here is a good idea. I have a dream that the kids from the Village School will come over to your house on a field trip and look at the solar panels and learn about the historic authenticity and how this this historical preservation can meet the future with along with social and environmental responsibilities.

G. Eaton is there any other questions.

Move from phase 4 to the deliberations.

C. Lahaye - Your all very passion about all your issues, touch upon real estate, esthetics, if you don't set a precedents soon, there is a fine line between preservation and progress, the next generation is not going to be as passionate as you. They might just say, oh that has oil heat; I'm out of here, if they own the place and too much, they will pick up and leave. I drive all over New England and I see abandon house everywhere. Ashburnham, MA, that's supposed to be

ritzy town, but there are houses abandon and we don't want that to happen to this town, if it becomes too expensive to live here, just a thought, but again on the historical end you want to preserve the theme here. You're a community that wants people to live here and progress. It is that fine line, a tight rope, it hard to walk and to make everybody happy. I admire all your passion. I don't think the next generation or caregivers might not be as passionate as you.

G. Eaton – As neutral as possible, the people in Washington can learn a lot from this Democratic The panel is challenged whatever their decision is for tonight, they feel the challenge (don't want to speak for you), but to render a decision and to offer some guidance. A thank you to the Panel.

N. Allen – Someone from the Commission maybe Vice Chair, can you tell us a little bit about a project related to a propane tank you wanted removed out of site? It was buried or something, can you explain, reason I'm asking is about energy, you all wanted it not visible.

Someone from the Commission - That was a house on the Common the homeowner installed a propane tank for heating and it was visible from the street and it was a big one. Question was acceptable to screen it, move it or bury it. Complicated from the fact the resident live out of state, he did agree to move it and screened it and it satisfied us. He then moved it up to the back of the yard. There are huge propane's in the district and large ones that are buried, not sure if they were mandated to bury or not. He didn't even apply to the Commission to install it, which he should have and the abutter complained and brought to the Commission attention. The tanks over at the school received permission from the Historic District Commission as the school was supposed to be there temporally. Another case you had, house or public building and a chimney had been removed, and the Commission saw that the chimney was return to it. They removed it without application and then rebuilt.

N. Allen - I know Elizabeth and Aaron just left but Elizabeth mentioned geothermal, can't quite say her words back, but a solar array on the ground and the geothermal could have a large impact in the vicinity of the installation like that, I'm not sure if that is true of geothermal. I have seen geothermal in a historic building and would never know they were there.

G. Eaton – Letter/Comments want to get into the public record

There are four documents that I was handed today and read the names to you.

Dwight and Barbara Stole – The panel has received them.

Aaron M Ellison – The panel has received them.

Dr. Elizabeth Farnsworth – The panel has received them.

Mary McKiernan – Came in late today at 8:52 AM

Dear Commission Members, I am writing to encourage you to uphold the decision of the Royalston Historic District Commission denying the application for solar panels on one of the

homes in the Historic District. While I am in favor in renewable sources of energy, they must adhere to the historical landscape of the common which has been preserved for centuries, solar panels are unsightly and will certainly distract from the pristine beauty of the Royalston Common, the proposed site of solar panels is visible from the street and therefore, denied, I look forward to my walks on along the common, the post office, I feel like I'm walking through a time capsule. The simple historic beauty of this Common is and I shudder to think this historic jewel be desecrated by solar panels. I respectfully request that you uphold the decision of the Royalston Historic District Commission denying this application. Thanks Mary McKiernan.

G. Eaton – Now you have all the written documents.

N. Allen – Again clarification been touched on by the public, your bylaws have only a few exemptions that you have no oversight of one is antennas. Has historically there has been some comments and discussion, should we have jurisdiction over satellite dishes. You have no oversight of antennas, you can't do a thing about it even if you want to, the next is air conditioners, storm windows you have more exemptions than we do in Petersham. We have to ignore things that you have to. Wireless and asphalt not listed you would be overruled some safety officer or agency get into the safety realm and that's how the state law is said. Wiring, asphalt, stop signs by your own bylaws, they aren't an issue as you don't have a saying on them and that non-commissioners understand that. You review projects that we don't even get to see in Petersham such as trellis, roofing shingles, chicken coops come before you, it is an incredible example of the dedicated oversight that you all have in this Town and this District, and it is all married together. Not sure if we'd go looking at a trellis but you have trained themselves of the appreciation of your Town and history that they came and ask you most of the time, that is just a huge result of the efforts of the commission. People love Petersham but if you look hard you will see more mess than you see in your town and that is to your credit.

B. Clark – I want to commend the Royalston Historic District Commission you have done a great job and proactive going by the Salem Massachusetts guidelines and give you something to work with. I think because you have adopted those as a guideline, I need to view that and keep that in mind and my decision based on that and the what I have seen of the structure and the photos provided, the talk about preservation and yes, preservation of the architecture features and those have changed overtime. It's what kind of impact does this have, certainly we asphalt shingles are much safer than wooden shingles if you are burning wood. What would be the impact of having a solar array if it was a partial solar array on the array and would be much more notable than the whole roof, where it would look like a whole roof? Those are some of the things you wrestle with. These are all things both the Historic District Commission wrestle with and the Applicant both go out of their way to try to minimize any intrusiveness. Thank you.

C. Lahaye – whatever is decided on, it is not going to be a precedent. It has to be case-by-case, this process here works. Whatever the case is, this should not, but may seem that way, but not a precedent. It is going to come up again and it will be something else. The Commission has done a great job, out there visiting sites and the presentation tonight was wonderful.

N. Allen – I want to remind us, make sure your bylaws trees and greenways have no bearing on anything, if all those trees disappear that's what we see, we have to look at these things not seeing the trees. Chuck reminded me of an earlier question re: precedents, but back in the 80's it wasn't viewable from the public way, others spoke and said it was. A neighbor has a lovely barn that looks out on the field, the first field you see when you enter Royalston nice long view of the beautiful barn, I wonder if that owner or future owners will say, well Ken got his solar panels, I want mine now and I do wonder idea of precedents not being said or being said and all have to deal with as Commission we dealt with vinyl siding a classic one. I really do wonder how the Commission would deal with that owner with the same homework and said, we want one there also, this idea of visibility, that owner would say well Ken got one, why can't I.

K. Lively - We mentioned before and Salem some of the other folks are case-by-case, each barn and house in this District is different. In my opinion it is only fair to rule it on my installation on my barn roof. There are multiple barns but a lot south roofs, not on your primary structure but on the barn, thinking barns now, that's why it is specifically says case-by-case each one is different. Ours is further off the street.

N. Allen, maybe you can remind Ken, what bylaw on vegetation, Commission our bylaws has no jurisdiction can't make anyone plant vegetation. The answer is "no" we have no jurisdiction. I assume your bylaws would prevail if there are any conflicts.

???It is a wonderful thing that we still have some barns left; many of them have been lost due to people not being able to keep them.

K. Lively, I agree barns in town centers are a wonderful thing and cherish it because that is how rare it is.

G. Eaton – Want to make sure everyone has gotten a chance to speak. To the local officials in the room, MRPC are typically letters used in a sentence and on my business card, whatever the panel decides and challenges and guides and provides guidance and I think they will, at the MRPC you pay an assessment to MRPC every year, the bottom line, I get a budget, those assessment that comes from 22 cities and towns in the greater Worcester County from Ayer to Athol, basically not a lot of money but I take that money and try to level it against state and federal grants, there is an opportunity within the next fiscal year to give some technical assistance to some towns struggling with issue of renewable energy, we have been doing some for the past couple years on a broad basis, working I think with Lunenburg on a micro basis and some other communities Templeton wind bylaw. This is an issue as a planner/administrator I can tell you go to the National American Planning Association Conference, spent a whole day session on solar and spent two hours on historic district. I came away with a lot and hope to be able to pass onto you. If we can provide some guidance and if I have some money in the budget, I can provide a planner to help. It is a struggle as a volunteer and all of our towns are volunteers. What we are here to help as an entity. Just want to make sure in the public

awareness part, you are aware of that. Our client is the town, not individually but is here to help.

A. Lively – Applicant – In today's day and age most of the people that go past this house are driving cars and the speed limit is 25MPH, but most people are going between 35 – 50 MPH. Which brings down the amount of time that people would see the panels? Thanks.

N. Allen – Bob and I are from Petersham and on the Commission there and we have never discussed this, our own commission members don't know we are here. Only contact we had today, was asked if we'd like to ride up to Royalston together and to please make sure we leave in enough time to go by the house and that was it. There was no discussion or opinions being made. MRPC has done a great job to set this up.

G. Eaton we really respect the volunteers time. We need to treat them like gold. We try to keep people relatively local. We don't deliberate; we get information and pass it on. For the record, we did receive questions about legality and we told both local official and the applicant, go talk to lawyers if you have to, we aren't lawyers at MRPC, we don't have legal counsel we pushed it back. There may be legal/procedural questions, not a fair conversation and not going to have it and want to be respectful to the record and have people really understand.

We are done from the public going to call the time/clock. Comments from the public, I will ask for the panel to close the public portion of the public hearing, the meeting continues it is a public meeting.

Can I get a motion?

The motion was 2nd and affirmative to close the public session and deliberate, time 9:40

Deliberation – Panel

Nancy Allen – This just a thought, I want Royalston to feel as clean as the driving snow, if we talk for a little while and then write our vote down on a piece of paper. I don't think that they won't trust Bob and me. Almost like a secret vote so no one feels like that we were being influence because we know each other as commission members in other words, I don't know you at all Chuck I can't influence you and you can't influence me.

G. Eaton - Asked what the question is?

N. Allen if we each wrote down Y or N after we deliberated, not knowing what each of us wrote down, of course we will show it to each other and talk, but I don't want anyone to think that any way Petersham Historic District had any extra time.

G. Eaton – I don't think that is a problem, wouldn't worry about it and cautious against using the word "secret."

N. Allen was just concerned where you have to people from the same Commission.

G. Eaton - It was public disclosure. You can move on.

B. Clark - I do not consider the solar panel as being precedent setting; they have already had them in the District. There were many innovations within the district over time. That people wouldn't certainly want to do without, the question is and only question is, does it change the architectural features, is it intrusive, certainly T.V. antennas certainly does and/or a dish, but do these, my feeling at least, if was half a roof, it would be very noticeable, because it is the whole roof, it is far less noticeable. It will increase the thickness again as it is about the shingles but minimum. The location is such that you have another house just below it so you really have a small window of visibility. They do go by the Salem Massachusetts Guidelines and I think they fit this proposal and fits very nicely in the guidelines, if they didn't go by these guidelines, it would be a much more difficult decisions. I think it falls very nicely and to those.

C. Lahaye - I agree with everything this gentleman said. I put it on my computer and saw the pictures and it's a fine line between preservation and progress. I don't know how we can hold someone back from saving money. The next generation and my kids don't want a house, they want a condo, they don't want to do the work I did, and their kids are going to follow the same. You don't want a ghost town. Case-by-case let him save some money, a lot of money just let it happen, it is a full roof. I was in the building business for 30 years and a full roof is a great idea, it is going to blend in and people aren't going to walk up and look 15 feet in the air and on the backside you'd have to go to the back of the house to see it.

G. Eaton - Point of clarification about visibility and ascetics and visual character, if I hear correctly full roof, full fabric, full roof, almost the same words, a common look, sounds like it anyways. Clearly understood for the record.

C. Lahaye – I'm for the Lively's. Sometimes on some building you see them propped up on a single angle and intrusive. He has the pitch and angle.

N. Allen – Historic District Commissions have a very specific charge, architectural features and structure. Whether any additions or changes are right in the Royalston bylaws. My mind I have to clear my mind about the issue of how green someone can be, the price of oil all critical issues but don't go directly to modifying architectural features of a historic structure. I believe this will be an industrial addition to this district, I believe it will look like an industrial addition, and there are no industrial parts per se without going to studying the schools in Royalston. That's the amazing thing about Royalston and there is a reason why it is the most pristine in the Commonwealth. I very concerned that some day when those trees die back and go down or another owner that the visibility will be more so. I look at it without seeing is an industrial plate on a historic structure on that barn and this as a Commission member we have to be very mindful of not letting this happen. In Petersham a few years ago we had an alternative energy application came in, was not a solar array but an outside wood boiler right in front of their house. Many people thought and all the same language that was stated today, want to get off

the oil, we voted unanimously it was an industrial addition to that landscape. This is certainly change architecture in my opinion very minimal.

G. Eaton and this is why we have odd panel, odd numbers on the Supreme Court. If I was to straw poll you, I think I'd know the results.

N. Allen – I think that it is important for this Commission that a member was missing, if that member that spoke earlier had been here, we wouldn't all be sitting here, there would have been a vote to 4 to 3 in favor. That Commission needs to learn that it is an important message, help guide or groom in such a high visibility; you continue to adhere with dates until all members can be there and none of this would have happened. It does send a message to me and what the voting would be and not a tie. Puts us in a funny position, almost here by accident.

G. Eaton – Great information on both side a few years ago was more one sided.

N. Allen – this goes to the people of the heart of the wallets, going green

G. Eaton – do you all feel comfortable in taken a vote

All panelists are ready to vote

G. Eaton – read the bylaw

We want to take a motion that we are ready to vote and take a vote.

We are ready to motion after we complete our deliberations to vote on the issue at hand.

Second the motion – N. Allen second the motion

All in favor of going to a vote:

Chuck LaHaye - Yes

Nancy Allen - Yes

Bob Clark – Yes

Chuck like to make a motion to vote for the applicant – in favor of the applicants petition, at 5 On the Common, Filed by Kenneth and Andrea Lively, 5 On the Common.

Bob second the motion.

G. Eaton – Roll Call

Chuck LaHaye – vote in favor

Bob Clark - in favor
Nancy Allen – no vote

A motion to adjourn all answered yes, adjourned 9:58PM

The bottom line is there is a decision in favor of the applicant by a 2 to 1 vote, the decision and all of the public records will be filed by the MRPC no later than the deadline July 1, 2012. So the applicant the Lively's, 5 on The Common, vote in their favor 2 to 1.

A member from the audience asked who the 1 and 2 where, Chuck and Bob voted in Favor, Nancy voted no.

